

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-SEPTEMBER 21,2021

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government – to bear the entire education cost of all government school students joining professional courses under the 7.5% quota**
 - ✓ This was announced by the chief minister M K Stalin on September 20.
 - ✓ Around 12,000 students would be benefited under the quota to pursue engineering, agriculture, veterinary science, fisheries and law courses
 - ✓ The government will bear the tuition fees, hostel fees and counselling fees of the students
 - ✓ According to the CM, 69% of students of government schools came from villages and the special reservation has become a virtual rural development scheme.
 - ✓ He recalled it was the DMK government headed by M Karunanidhi that cancelled entrance exams for medical and engineering courses as it had been blocking the entry of rural students in professional courses.

- **Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF), India – has established a dedicated facility to cater exclusively to the needs of people with dementia in Chennai**
 - ✓ Sri T S Santhanam Centre for Elderly Care and Sundram Fasteners Centre for Dementia Research in Selaiyur will be inaugurated on World Alzheimer's Day, September 21, by the minister for health and family welfare, Ma Subramanian.
 - ✓ India has 41 lakh people with dementia, a condition that affects the brain, impairs its functions, including memory, and causes inability to perform familiar activities.
 - ✓ In Chennai alone, about 30,000 people live with the disorder.
 - ✓ SCARF's Centre will offer assessment, diagnosis, and treatment for dementia with a personalized care plan for each individual, education and support for family members

- ✓ A structured cognitive engagement and other psychological interventions to improve cognition and manage behavioural changes, nursing care, an activity hall, nutritious diet and supervised activities will also be provided at the Centre.
- ✓ SCARF's new centre also plans to train and educate caregivers and begin offering nursing assistance at home.
- ✓ Dementia Care in SCARF (DEMCARES) already runs a support group for caregivers.

STATES

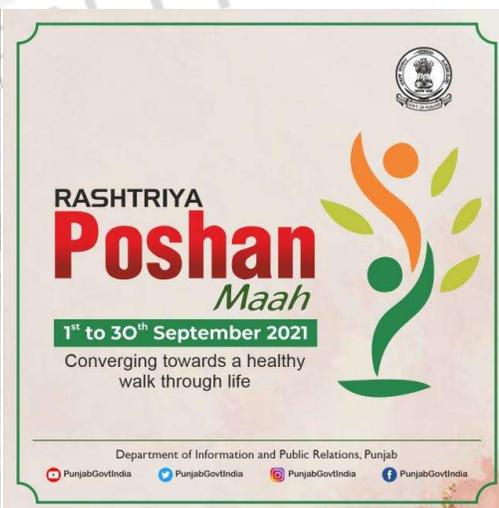
- **In Karnataka, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai - introduced a bill in the assembly to protect unauthorised religious structures facing demolition**
- ✓ The Karnataka Religious Structures (Protection) Bill 2021 envisages providing protection to all religious structures in public places which are constructed without the requisite sanction from competent authorities
- ✓ The Bill seeks to protect temples, churches, mosques, gurudwaras and other major religious constructions
- ✓ The bill aims at protecting illegal religious structures built before the date of its enactment
- ✓ It also seeks to prevent construction of illegal shrines in public places such as roads, streets, parks and playgrounds.
- ✓ The cabinet approved the bill though it contravenes the 2009 Supreme Court directive to raze all places of worship in the country that have encroached on public properties.

NATIONAL

- **The food ministry and CSC e-Governance Services India (CSC) - signed an agreement for mutual collaboration on September 20, 2021**
- ✓ As per the agreement, ration shops or fair price shops (FPS) will have the option to work as a Common Service Centre
- ✓ Accordingly, the ration shops can be used by beneficiaries for paying utility bills, PAN application, passport application and Election Commission services.
- ✓ The food ministry said this will help increase the income of ration dealers and the beneficiaries of highly subsidised foodgrain will get these services close to their homes.
- ✓ The CSC will now identify feasible activities that can be provided at the ration shops so that these can work as CSC Service Centres.
- ✓ The CSC will tie up with state governments for signing bilateral MoUs for providing interested ration shop dealers access to Digital Seva Portal (DSP) for delivery of CSC services.
- ✓ Moreover, ration card services provided by states and UTs such as application for new cards, updating existing ration card, Aadhaar seeding request, status check

of ration availability and grievance registration can be explored by states through CSCs as an additional option.

- **Government think tank Niti Aayog in collaboration with US-based Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India - launched an initiative to promote zero-pollution delivery vehicles**
 - ✓ The campaign, Shoonya, aims to promote the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in the urban deliveries segment
 - ✓ In this regard, a meeting was chaired by Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant recently
 - ✓ Around 30 companies including Mahindra Electric, Tata Motors, Zomato, Ashok Leyland, Sun Mobility, Lightning Logistics, Big Basket, Bluedart, Hero Electric, and Swiggy among others attended the kick-off meeting
 - ✓ As part of the campaign, a corporate branding and certification programme is being launched to recognise and promote the industry's efforts towards transitioning to Electric vehicles
 - ✓ Urban freight vehicles account for 10% of freight transportation-related CO₂ emissions in India, and these emissions are expected to grow by 114% by 2030
- **The month-long 'POSHAN Maah' or National Nutrition Mission under POSHAN Abhiyan – is being observed across the country in the month of September 2021**



- ✓ The 4th edition of POSHAN Maah is organized by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development
- ✓ This year, the 'POSHAN Maah' is being celebrated under the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'
- ✓ The entire month has been subdivided into four weekly themes for a focussed approach this year
- ✓ The first theme is Plantation Activity known as "Poshan Vatika" and will be observed from September 1 to 7.

- ✓ The second theme is 'Yoga and AYUSH for nutrition' and will be observed from September 8 to 15.
 - ✓ The third theme will focus on distribution of 'Regional Nutrition Kit' to Anganwadi beneficiaries of High Burdened Districts and will be observed from September 16 to 23
 - ✓ The fourth theme is 'Identification of SAM (Severely Acute Malnourished) children and distribution of nutritious food' and will be observed from September 24 to 30.
 - ✓ On the occasion of International Women's Day on March 8, 2018, PM Narendra Modi launched the 'Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition' or POSHAN Abhiyaan, which is also known as National Nutrition Mission
 - ✓ It is Government's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers, with the vision to make India malnutrition free by 2022
 - ✓ The Poshan Abhiyaan aims to reduce child under-nutrition and low birth weight by 2% a year, and anaemia across age groups by 3%
 - ✓ As part of the POSHAN Abhiyan, the month of September is observed as Poshan Maah every year
 - ✓ This month highlights the importance and role of the right nutrition for the human body
 - ✓ During the POSHAN Maah, activities related to nutrition awareness will be carried out across the country at the grass root levels.
 - ✓ The implementing departments and agencies like women and child development department through Anganwadi workers and health and family welfare department through ASHA, ANM, will spread the message of holistic nutrition for women and children throughout the month
 - ✓ According to UN's Food and Agriculture Organization report, 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, 2020, 189.2 million people or 14% of India's population are undernourished
 - ✓ The report also highlights that 34.7% of the children aged under five in India are stunted or too short for their age, while 20% suffer from wasting, meaning their weight is too low for their height
- **The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) - launched a digital platform for dairy farmers to provide real-time information on animal health, nutrition and breed development**
- ✓ Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala launched the web version of e-GOPALA application and IMAP web portal at NDDB campus at Anand recently
 - ✓ E-GOPALA App is a comprehensive breed improvement marketplace and information portal for the direct use of farmers, launched by PM Narendra Modi in 2020
 - ✓ This app will give all information related to productivity, health, and diet to the cattle owners.

**Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying
launches web version of NDDB-developed e-GOPALA
application & IMAP web portal**



- ✓ The e-GOPALA platform helps farmers manage their livestock including buying and selling of disease-free germplasm in all forms (semen, embryos, etc)
 - ✓ It also informs about availability of quality breeding services and guides farmers for animal nutrition, treatment of animals using appropriate Ayurvedic ethno veterinary medicine.
 - ✓ Further, the APP also contains a mechanism to send alert (on due date for vaccination, pregnancy diagnosis, calving etc) and inform farmers about various government schemes.
 - ✓ The i-MAP web portal provides real-time information to dairy farmers for better productivity of dairy animals.
- **The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare - signed 5 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) for pilot projects with five private companies**



- ✓ The 5 companies are US multinational tech conglomerate Cisco, Kolkata-based corporate major ITC, commodities major's IT arm NCDEX e-Markets Ltd (NeML), Reliance Industries' IT arm Jio Platforms and India's largest fresh produce supply chain firm Ninjacart
- ✓ The MOUs were signed by Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar at a ceremony in New Delhi recently
- ✓ The five firms will develop proof of concepts (PoC) for the agriculture sector.
- ✓ Jio Platforms Limited will conduct its pilot project to provide advisories to farmers in two districts of Maharashtra– Jalna and Nasik.

- ✓ The ITC Limited has signed the MoU for building a “Customized ‘Site Specific Crop Advisory’ service.”
- ✓ Cisco will “conceptualize a Proof of Concept in effective knowledge sharing between farmers, administration, academia and industry” in two districts–Kaithal (Haryana) and Morena (Madhya Pradesh).
- ✓ The NCDEX e Markets Limited (NeML) will work on four services–Market Linkages, Aggregation of demand, Financial Linkages and Data Sanitization– across three Districts – Guntur (Andhra Pradesh), Devanagere (Karnataka) and Nasik (Maharashtra)
- ✓ Ninjacart will develop and host the Agri Marketplace Platform (AMP), which will enable bringing together all the participants in the post-harvest market linkage.
- ✓ As per MoU, Proof of Concept (POC) will be conducted in Anand (Gujarat), Chhindwara (Madhya Pradesh) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh).
- ✓ Earlier, the Ministry has signed MoUs with Microsoft, Star Agribazaar, Esri India Technologies Private Limited, Patanjali and Amazon.
- ✓ A Digital agriculture mission has been initiated for 2021 -2025 by government for projects based on new technologies like artificial intelligence, block chain, remote sensing and GIS technology, use of drones and robots etc.

DEFENCE

- **The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) - kicked off a joint military exercise in the Orenburg region in South West Russia on September 20**



- ✓ The 6th edition of SCO exercise called ‘Peaceful Mission 2021’ features troops from India, China and Pakistan among others.
- ✓ An Indian military contingent of around 200 Army and IAF personnel are taking part in the exercise
- ✓ China has deployed over 600 soldiers, while there are 66 personnel from Pakistan.
- ✓ India had pulled out of the SCO counter-terrorism ‘Kavkaz’ exercise in Russia in September last year because Chinese as well as Pakistani troops were also slated to take part in the combat drills

RANKINGS

- **India – is ranked at 46th position in the Global Innovation index (GII) for 2021 among 132 countries, according to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).**



- ✓ Last year, the country is ranked at 48th spot, making it into the top 50 for the first time
- ✓ India has seen a rising trajectory over the past several years, improving its rank significantly from 81 in 2015.
- ✓ Switzerland, Sweden, US, UK, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, Finland, Singapore, Denmark and Germany complete the Top 10 rankings this year
- ✓ Among Asian economies, South Korea jumped to the fifth position, up from 10 last year, while China was in the 12th position.
- ✓ This year, India is ranked at 2nd place in the lower middle-income group.
- ✓ India held the 3rd position in its income group in 2019 and 2020 having entered the top three in 2019
- ✓ The index is a ranking of the innovation capabilities and results of world economies.
- ✓ It measures innovation based on criteria that include institutions, human capital and research, infrastructure, credit, investment, linkages; the creation, absorption and diffusion of knowledge; and creative outputs.
- ✓ India, Moldova and Vietnam are record holders for being innovation achievers for the 11th consecutive year, as per the report
- ✓ The WIPO is a specialised agency of the UN, which publishes the report in collaboration with the Portulans Institute with support from corporate network partners such as the Confederation of Indian Industry, Brazilian National Confederation of Industry, Ecopetrol Group from Columbia and the Turkish Exporters Assembly.